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UNCLAS YEREVAN 001207

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR EUR/CACEN, DRL

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MAY 21 OPPOSITION RALLY CALM, NO NEW ARRESTS

REF: YEREVAN 1190

1. (U) Sensitive But Unclassified. Please treat accordingly.

LARGE RALLY, BUT CALM

2. (SBU) Despite concerns raised by the May 20 preventive detentions (reftel), the May 21 opposition rally attracted roughly 12,000-15,000 participants, proceeded calmly, and was followed by no new arrests. The opposition has called the next rally for Friday, June 4.

COMMENT: NO NEWS FOR NOW

3. (SBU) The (relatively) large numbers of protesters notwithstanding, the crowd never displayed the "energy" that opposition leaders are still hoping to generate -- and with the weekend papers filled with yet more articles and editorials on in-fighting and bickering among key opposition leaders, it remains unlikely that they will be able to garner significant support among the population.
ORDWAY